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Medieval settlement in the Blackheath Hundred

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The Blackheath Hundred stretches from the North Downs into the Weald, encompassing a range of soil types and, therefore, natural resources. Development of the late Anglo-Saxon and medieval settlement pattern is largely governed by this factor and clear variations between the different parts of the Hundred can be seen in the distribution of selected place-name elements and in the ecclesiastical and tenurial divisions.

'Another desire is for far more detailed regional studies. Although it has always been axiomatic that landscape history is based on the results of such studies, the inevitable drive for generalization and synthesis has meant that local and regional differences have often been smoothed over or ignored. Yet, no matter how awkward the results of such studies may be to the theories of the generalists, they remain fundamental to landscape history.' (Taylor 2000, 161)

Introduction

This paper is intended to respond to Chris Taylor's plea and to argue that the chronology and economic basis of late Saxon and medieval settlement varied on a very local scale within a single territorial unit, the Blackheath Hundred (fig 8.1).

The economy of rural Anglo-Saxon England was agricultural. The basic unit of land, the hide, was a unit of assessment and not a fixed area, but the manner in which hides were grouped together to form estates has exercised many minds. Attempts to see regularity have often revolved around an 80-hide round number assessment for units such as hundreds (for groupings of 160 or 80 *sulungs* in Kent, see Jolliffe 1933, 44–8 etc), or multiples of 5 hides for estates (eg Round 1908, 276). Although such work has tended to result in circular arguments, the Surrey Domesday does hint at an early and stable basic unit of 20 hides and a number of territorial units consist of divisions or multiples of this unit. The Blackheath Hundred, coincidentally or not, is an 80-hide unit that appears to have been divided at an unknown, but pre-Conquest, date into two portions, each of 40 hides. These may be named for convenience the Bramley (or western) and Gomshall (or eastern) half. The western half comprised the multiple estate (Blair 1991, 25–6) of Bramley and at Domesday supported double the population of the Gomshall half, despite the similarity in both area and geldable assessment.

The grouping of pre-existing small units into large estates may have been taking place from the 7th century and the concept of the multiple or multi-*vill* estate has many adherents. The model originates in Welsh law books from the medieval period thought to be based on older texts (Vinogradoff & Morgan 1914, v) and the concept was later specifically related to the lathes of Kent and the rapes of Sussex (Jolliffe 1933, *passim*). Part of Jolliffe's view was that the multi-*vill* estate reflected the situation in some past golden age when the Jutes imported into south-east England a life which could be 'lived without servitude, without debasing inequality, and yet preserve a fabric of order, adequately protected justice, and continuity' (Jolliffe 1933, 119). More recently the view has been taken that rather than being Jutish imports, multi-*vill* estates represent a survival of an earlier 'Celtic' tradition and its adoption by the incoming Germanic peoples (eg Jones 1976). An alternative view relates

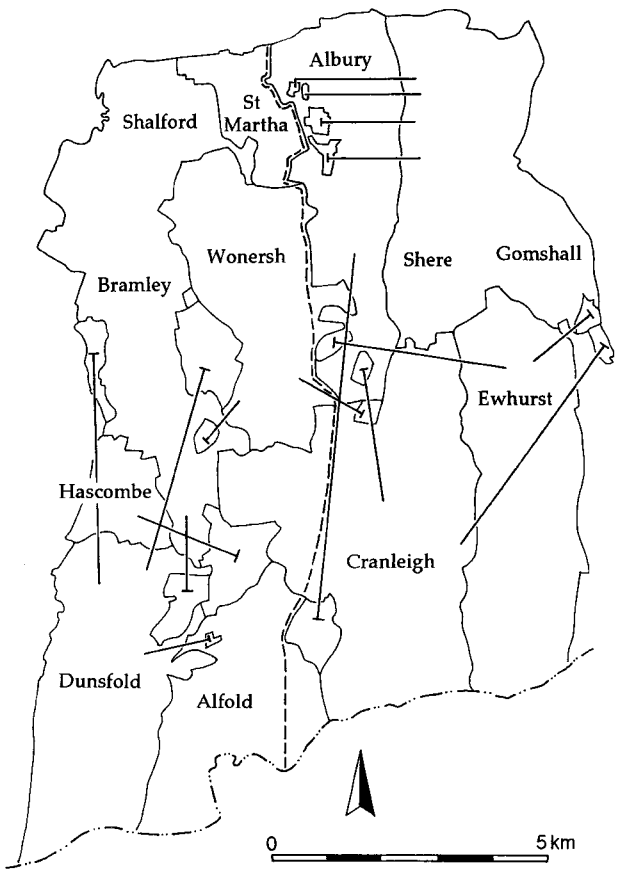

Fig 8.1 The Blackheath Hundred showing late 19th century parochial boundaries and the eastern boundary of the putative Bramley estate. Dashed line represents approximate position of boundary between Bramley and Gomshall halves.

territorial development to changes within society and sees multiple estates as a response to the need for large production units to support royal *vills* with, perhaps, an associated minster (Gelling 1976, 829–33; Hooke 1998, 52). Whatever their origins, the individual units within these estates are considered to have taken on specialized functions and to have been answerable to an administrative centre. Certainly place-names and

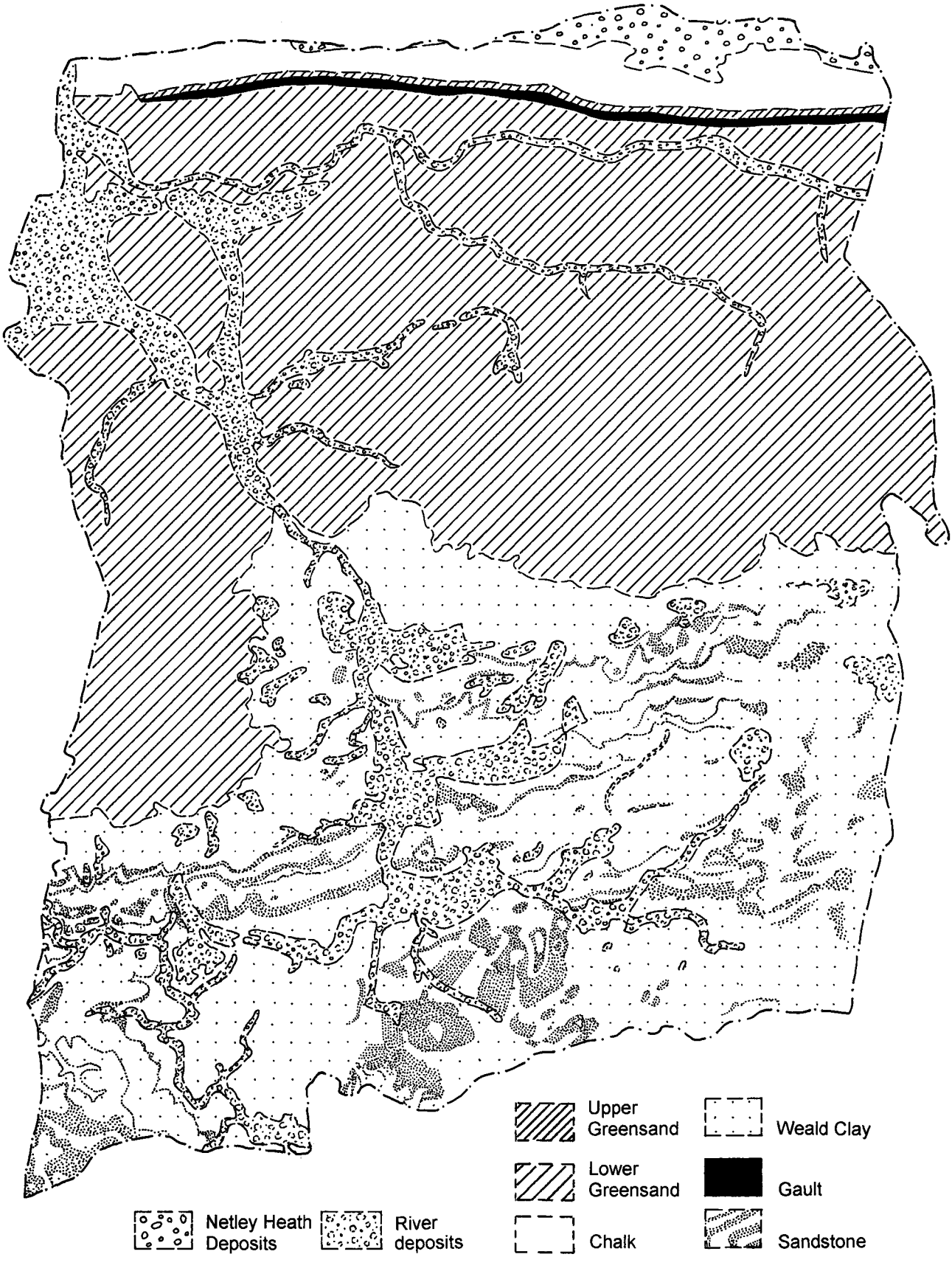

Fig 8.2 Simplified geology of the Blackheath Hundred

other evidence can be used to define holdings which appear to have a particular place within a mixed farming economy. In many cases it is difficult to know whether this situation derives from the organized specialization implied by the multiple estate model or from more independent selection of areas best suited to a particular type of resource utilization. However, the ecclesiastical and tenurial relationships within the western half of the Blackheath Hundred encourage the belief that the Bramley of 1086 represented a phase in a fast fragmenting multiple estate.

The Domesday entry for Bramley in Surrey describes a holding of 40 hides with a population of 147 heads of household, including *servii* as head of household, and three churches, placing it as the third most populous estate in the county after Guildford and Kingston. Bramley is now a village which did not become a parish until 1844 – clearly the Domesday assessors recorded a large estate which stretched into the Weald probably encompassing the settlement areas of Bramley, Wonersh, Hascombe, Dunsfold, Alfold and parts of Cranleigh and Shalford (fig 8.1). The three churches assessed under Bramley in 1086 have been identified as Shalford, the mother church of the estate, Wonersh, and the Wealden church at Hascombe (Blair 1991, 119).

The two halves of the Blackheath Hundred present contrasting geology and topography and also different ownership in the 11th century – Bramley passed from secular to ecclesiastical control while Gomshall was primarily under royal control. In 1086, the Bramley half supported double the population of the Gomshall half and it has been suggested (Blair 1991, 53) that the earlier development of Bramley resulted from entrepreneurial ownership. However, it is the contention of the authors that the wider range of available resources, easier communications and the presence of the late Saxon *burh* of Guildford (Hill 2000, 177–8) may have been the cause of the preferential exploitation of this area of the Weald.

Geology and topography

The geology and topography of the Blackheath Hundred and its immediate surroundings are shown in simplified form in figures 8.2 and 8.3. The western half of the Hundred is dominated by the Bramley Wey (also known as Cranleigh Waters) and its alluvia, gravel terraces and head deposits which lie between the greensand (Hythe Beds) ridge which bears Hascombe hillfort at its southernmost point and the dry, infertile plateau of Farley Heath and Blackheath. There are areas of head and gravel to both east and west of the river, some are associated with present day tributaries and some with streams diverted when the Dunsfold Arun captured the headwaters of the Bramley Wey (Gallois 1965, 77). The northern end of the valley contained the Peasmarsh, an extensive area of wet land enclosed and drained during the early 19th century in response to the raised food prices occasioned by the Napoleonic Wars (Gorton 1996). South of the line of the Lower Greensand escarpment these outcrops and deposits of sandstone, limestone, head and gravel account for some 30% of the land. In modern agricultural terms only 3.1% of the present administrative county comprises grades 1 or 2 land but several patches of grade 2 exist in this valley, the southern end of which is marked by the sandstone and limestone ridge forming the watershed between the rivers Wey and Arun (and the county boundary between Surrey and Sussex). The eastern half of the Hundred forms a more typical section through Wealden geology with, from north to south, the chalk of the North Downs, the Gault clay and Lower Greensand of the Tillingbourne valley and the arid, acid sands of the Lower Greensand ridge with its steep scarp overlooking the Weald Clay. This simple pattern is, however, complicated in the south of the Hundred by the faults and folding of the Walliswood anticline, the Oakwood Hill syncline, the Alfold anticline and the Plaistow syncline, allowing exposure of sandstone and limestone strata contained within the clay (Gallois 1965, 54).

Communications

Communications within the eastern half of the Blackheath Hundred are dominated by a series of north–south tracks running from the Tillingbourne

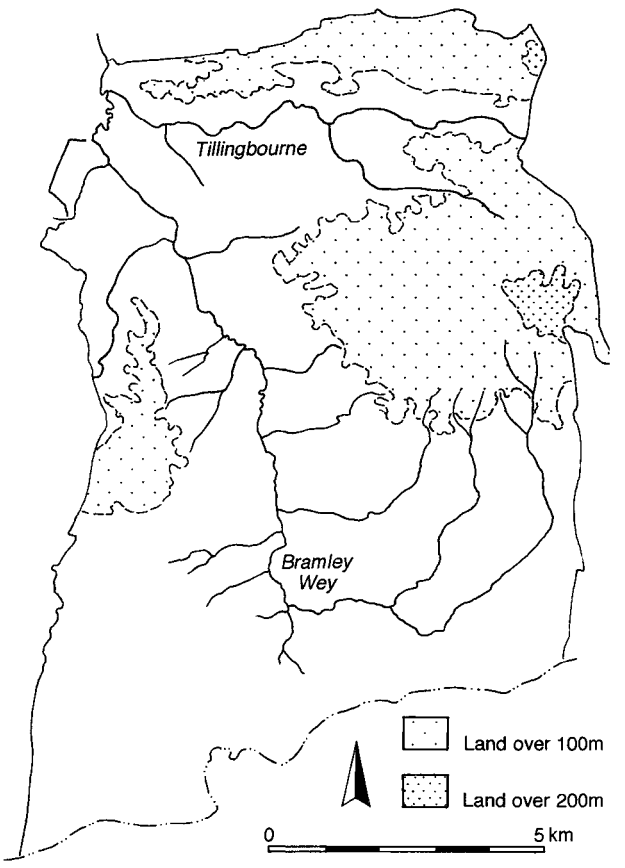

Fig 8.3 Simplified topography of the Blackheath Hundred. (© Crown Copyright NC/04/25242)

valley which have cut deep holloways over the greensand ridge and stretch into the Weald, in some cases as far south as the Surrey/Sussex boundary. Such tracks, common in all counties bounding the Weald, originated as drove-ways linking parent holdings with their Wealden outliers and form the basis of the present road system. Other tracks lead north from the villages in the Tillingbourne valley to provide access to grazing on the North Downs and the villages themselves are linked by a route along the valley. Some short-distance east–west links of uncertain antiquity take advantage of the higher ground south of the valley while the medieval and later drove-way from Guildford to Dorking is still a prominent feature along the crest of the Downs. There is no evidence that this was ever part of a long-distance route (Turner 1980).

The northern end of the Bramley half of Blackheath Hundred, arguably the first to come under Anglo-Saxon influence with its proximity to the 5th/6th century cemetery at Guildown, (Lowther 1931), is dominated by the junctions of the Wey with its tributaries the Bramley Wey and the Tillingbourne. The resultant wet area of the Peasmarsh must have impeded traffic between the Bramley estate and Guildford, its closest market at least from the early 10th century. The modern road crosses the Tillingbourne near the mother church of the estate at a point where the original crossing gave its name to the village of Shalford. After crossing the Tillingbourne, the early road passed to the east of the Peasmarsh, keeping to the better-drained sandy soils of the present Shalford Common until it reached Wonersh. One branch then continued south to Cranleigh, Ewhurst and Alfold while the other turned west to cross the Bramley Wey and pass through the settlement of Bramley before climbing the greensand ridge which bounds the west of the valley to reach Hascombe and Dunsfold.

While routes in use during the medieval period and probably earlier can be located, communication was difficult and resulted in delayed and inhibited development. Some produce, in the form of stock, could be walked to market but heavy goods – grain, timber, iron or brick and tile for example – could not be reliably and cheaply transported to non-local end-users for considerable periods of the year.

The evidence of place-names (fig 8.4)

Place-name derivations used in this section are taken from Gover *et al* (1934).

ERSC – STUBBLE OR PLOUGHED LAND

Of nineteen examples of the place-name element *-ersc* occurring in Surrey before 1450, fifteen are in the Blackheath Hundred and of these twelve are found in the valley of the Bramley Wey. *Ersc* is considered to indicate areas particularly suitable for arable farming

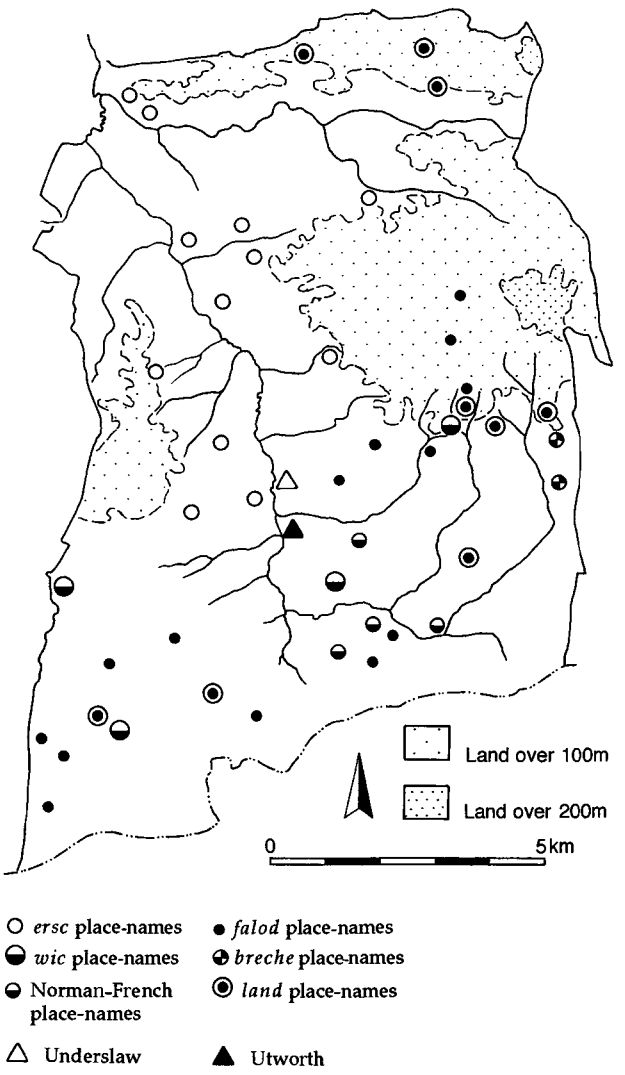

Fig 8.4 Location of place-names in Old English, Norman French and Middle English indicative of land use. (© Crown Copyright NC/04/25242)

and Brandon (1978, 148) suggested that use of this element may have denoted an early phase of shifting agriculture. More recently this and other clusters of this element have been identified, all in areas not totally suited to arable farming, and a meaning has been suggested of 'occasional ploughland amid woodland, pasture, marsh or moorland and representing early attempts to cultivate later-settled areas of England' (Gelling & Cole 2000, 268). Use of this place-name element to indicate early land use in Surrey is problematic since the term survived in local dialect as *errish, arish, ersh* or *arsh* until recently. Indeed, one of the present authors (JE) met an elderly farmer in Ewhurst in the 1980s who could define an *arish* as a field, or often only part of a field, where it was possible to grow oats or rye instead of the all-pervasive wheat. Late usage accounts for the many fields called Ryarsh or Oatersh and this discussion is limited to those names which occurred before 1450 and became attached to a habitation site.

Arguably the word relates to relatively light soils, usually in clay areas. Within Blackheath Hundred (fig 8.4) seven *ersc* names are situated on Hythe Beds

bounding the northern and western sides of the Bramley Wey valley, three are on gravel terraces overlying Weald Clay, two are on Atherfield Clay and two are on small sandstone outcrops surrounded by Weald Clay. The exact site of one is lost. The four other Surrey locations are all on small areas of gravel surrounded by Weald Clay. While this concentration within the western half of the Blackheath Hundred emphasizes its relative suitability for arable farming when compared with the remainder of the Weald, it is the exceptional nature of small areas of lighter soils that appears to be indicated – the word does not occur on the large areas of light soil provided by either chalk Downs or the greensand.

North of the North Downs the estates of settlements on the spring line are spaced at narrow intervals, as are those in the Tillingbourne valley. Both held land from the crest of the Downs, those to the north out on to London Clay and those in the Tillingbourne valley on to Weald Clay. These settlements had ample arable land on the gentle dip slope of the Downs and the lack of any need to utilize small areas of suitable land set within the London Clay probably accounts for the lack of place-names containing the element *ersc* in this area.

The prefixes of the *-ersc* place-names do not conform to any pattern: six examples are duplexed with personal names, four describe the location as close to a stream (Rydinghurst), a meadow (Medersh), or a particular species of tree (Mapledrakes and Purnish (pear)). Two define crops grown as flax and rye, plants requiring relatively well-drained soil, and others describe the fields as, for example, 'spotted' or 'crooked'. The change in place-name element from *-ersc* to *-hurst* in Rydinghurst indicates the possible loss of further examples of the use of this element.

LAND AND *BRAEC* – OTHER ELEMENTS DENOTING ARABLE LAND

The word *land* as part of the name of a habitation site occurs nine times in the Blackheath Hundred and in no case is the settlement located in an area well suited to arable cultivation. In three cases the name is attached to an isolated farm situated high on the scarp slope of the North Downs. One became the name of a hamlet, Pitland, which developed in a steep-sided, east-facing valley in an elevated position on the Hythe Beds of the Lower Greensand where the soil is an acid, infertile sand. The remaining five examples are all found on Weald Clay in areas particularly distant from recognized foci of medieval settlement.

Only two examples of the word *braec* – meaning newly broken land – have been found and both appear to be in the ME form of *breche*. They are located in Ewhurst parish, an area generally thought to be of late settlement (Balchin *et al*, forthcoming).

FALOD – AN ENCLOSURE FOR ANIMALS

This place-name element clusters within a limited area of south-west Surrey and north-west Sussex and the Blackheath Hundred is within the former concentration. No names containing *falod* occur in the Bramley Wey valley; they are found predominantly in the Weald Clay area in the southern part of the Hundred (thirteen out of fifteen). Even so, some effort was made to avoid the worst of the clay and eleven out of the thirteen are situated on small outcrops of better-drained land, on sandstone, limestone, head, gravel or alluvium. This careful selection of sites is typical of Wealden settlement and has long been recognized (Marshall 1817, 367). Of the two found on Hythe Beds one, Winterfold, was relatively close to its parent settlement, Shere, and unusually appears to have been in a place used for winter grazing (fig 8.4).

WIC – A SPECIALIZED SETTLEMENT

The place-name element *-wic* is unusual in that it appears to have more than one meaning. When used as a suffix, it may have implied specialized settlement, the full meaning depending on the context. In the context of rural settlement, it appears to denote some kind of special farm.

Of the 26 names found in Surrey, sixteen are situated in the Weald and of these four are in the Blackheath Hundred (fig 8.4). None are found in the valley of the Bramley Wey but with the exception of Howicks in Dunsfold none are on the heaviest of the Weald Clay. Markwick (Merkewyke in 1282) is on well-drained land on the greensand ridge bounding the west side of the Bramley Wey valley and may have been thought special from its position on a boundary: that between Hascombe and Dunsfold. Wickhurst is also situated on the scarp slope of the Lower Greensand and Rutwick (now lost) was on an outcrop of sandstone.

ELEMENTS DESCRIBING USE OF WOODLAND RESOURCES

Like most areas of the Weald the Blackheath Hundred abounds in place-names denoting either the presence or clearance of woodland. Some, for example OE *graf* meaning a coppice (as in Grafham) and *holt* (a single-species wood), indicate managed woodland, although it is unlikely that much if any woodland remained unmanaged by the medieval period. A few specific examples of use of timber resources survive in place-names. Ridgebridge in Wonersh is first mentioned as *la Risbrigge*, the first element of which derives from OE *hris* meaning 'brushwood'. The area is one of wet land on either side of the Bramley Wey and the name indicates that the road crossing this marsh was carried on a causeway of brushwood. Emply Barn has the early

form *Ymphagh* and denotes an enclosure made of *imps* or young saplings, presumably a hedged enclosure and, from its position on the greensand ridge to the west of the Bramley Wey, one made either to hold stock or possibly to enclose land held in severalty in an area of common grazing. Plonks Farm may have been built entirely of planks, instead of the more common timbered framework, or may possibly have been a supplier of prepared timber planks (A Reynolds, pers comm).

PLACE-NAMES OF NORMAN-FRENCH DERIVATION

Three place-names in the Blackheath Hundred are derived from Norman-French and all relate to cattle raising. The capital messuage for the manor of Shere Vachery (post-1309), *la Vacherie* (first recorded in 1245) is situated adjoining the Surrey/Sussex border and denotes a dairy farm. The other two, Butcherhouse and Boverishe (now called Wyphurst, SHC: RB591) indicate butchery and are located in the south of the Hundred on Weald Clay.

PLACE-NAMES CONTAINING OTHER SIGNIFICANT ELEMENTS

Underslaw – Thondurslaghus

The present Underslaw Farm is situated close to the southern end of the Bramley estate. The late first mention of this name, in 1419 (Penshurst 1925 (derived Gover *et al* 1934)), precludes any real discussion of its origins but the possibility exists that it derives from the element *hlaw* and the name of the god Thor (English 1988).

Utworth

Place-names containing the element *-worth* are rare in the Weald of Surrey. It has been suggested (English 2002) that this element distinguished early enclosures held in severalty (ie by an individual tenant) from land otherwise held in common, and that these may have been for arable use within areas generally used for grazing stock. Edgeworth, in Horley, is close to Thunderfield Common, deep in the Weald Clay. This is usually thought to be the *thunres felda* where Alfred had a *ham*, and also the *thunresfelda* where the *witan* met in the 930s but there is no certainty in this identification (Turner 1997): the name suggests an area of early religious significance. The position of Utworth, also on Weald Clay but at the southern end of the Bramley estate, may add weight to the designation of this latter area as one of early Wealden settlement.

Identification of early grazing areas and permanent settlements

Use of Wealden woodland for transhumance grazing has been extensively discussed (eg Witney 1976). However, in the absence of surviving documentary evidence contemporary with the use of the Wealden area of the Blackheath Hundred for transhumance, any identification of early grazing areas must rely either on the use of later documents or on evidence in the field. The former approach has recently been used by Ellaby (2000) to identify the precise location of the demesne lands of Reigate Priory in Horley parish, recognizing that, with their original ownership by manors north of the Weald, they provide an insight into a local complex of pre-Conquest distant pastures. While these are commonly described as swine pastures, the point has been made that, given the difficulty of driving pigs over long distances, these areas may originally have been used for summer pasturing of cattle (Turner 1997). The alternative technique of attempting to recognize the boundaries of early enclosures where they have survived into the modern landscape is described here using two examples within the Blackheath Hundred.

WILDWOOD, ALFOLD

La Wyldewode is first mentioned obliquely in an Alfold deed of 1294/5 transcribed by Giuseppi (1903, 222). In 1313 *le Wylwode* was held by John d'Abernon as a detached Wealden portion of Albury Manor and a survey of that manor in 1327 included 40 acres of oak wood not for pasture valued at 5 shillings and no more because of the shade of the trees (*XL acr boscis querci ni cujus pastura val p vs et non plus pro umbra arborum*), which probably refers to Wildwood (SHC: 1322/4/56). The contrast recognized here seems to be between wood pasture and woodland where only sparse grazing, or possibly pannage, was available. Buildings are first mentioned in 1391 when Elizabeth Grey, lady of Stoke d'Abernon, granted the soil and wood of Wildwood except for the moat, grange and manorial rights (Manning & Bray 1809, 71; Redstone 1911, 78).

The moated site in Wildwood Copse lay within a detached portion of Albury parish until rationalization of the boundaries in the late 19th century. The exact status of Wildwood in the medieval period is uncertain: between 1498 and 1558 several holdings in Alfold which later paid suit at Wildwood are mentioned in the court rolls of Albury Manor (SHC: 1322/1/1–25) suggesting that Wildwood was not then a separate manor despite the mention of manorial rights in 1391 (Redstone 1911, 78 n11). A court book for Wildwood Manor (known to be in private ownership *c*1995 but now said to be lost) intermittently details courts baron and views of frankpledge between 1632/3 and 1901. Most of the holdings paying suit to Wildwood Manor lay outside, and to the south of, the Albury parochial detachment and an attempt to reconstruct the outline of the 17th

Fig 8.5 Putative outline of an early grazing area associated with the extra-Wealden settlement of Albury, and later with the sub-infeudated manor of Wildwood, reconstructed from the relevant mid-19th century tithe maps and awards.

century manor from later sources is shown in figure 8.5. They can be seen to form a compact block of land stretching to the Surrey/Sussex boundary, the eastern and western boundaries of which are continuous with the respective boundaries of the detached portion of Albury parish. This may, in turn, have been the demesne of Wildwood Manor. It seems likely that these continuous boundaries, which enclose an area about 4.5 x 1.5km, represent the outline of the original grazing area.

RUMBEAMS, EWHURST

This example of a possible early Wealden holding has already been published (English 1997). In summary, a 60-acre holding adjacent to an area of common, Ewhurst Green, was until recently surrounded by an arc-shaped bank and ditch notably at odds with the usual pattern of polygonal shapes (fig 8.6). Field boundaries on either side of this arc abut and therefore post-date it. A holding of this form would seem either to have been imposed upon an existing land-

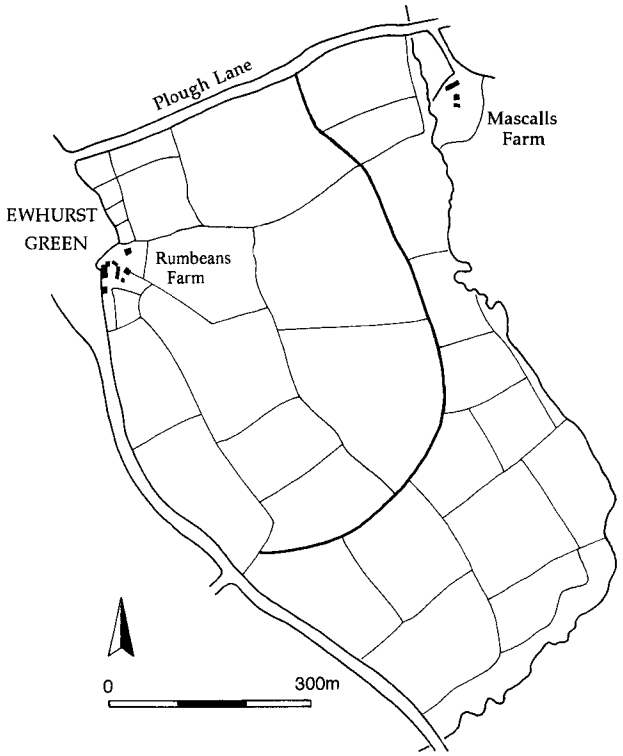

Fig 8.6 Arc-shaped boundary associated with Rumbeams Farm, reconstructed from the Ewhurst tithe map and award (after English, 1997).

scape of fields or to have pre-dated the development of the surrounding field system. In the absence of any evidence for a park or similar feature the former explanation seems unlikely and, particularly since the area enclosed appears to be the size of a virgate locally, it is tempting to see Rumbeams as an area specifically allocated, and demarcated from otherwise unenclosed land. The inference from this is that the demarcated land was held in severalty.

The smoothly arcing hedge-line implies a much more organized approach to Wealden clearance than the generally accepted piecemeal assarting and presages a high degree of landscape clearance before the hedge was set out.

The administrative mechanisms underlying the granting of Wealden land may have been variable but in some cases at least hidated units were involved. One such may have been Yard Farm, situated 1km north-east of Rumbeams, which in 1314 was named *de Virga*, derived from the OE *gierd, gyrd* meaning a measure of land (Gover *et al* 1934, 241); others are suggested by the not uncommon Hyde Farm. While land clearance may have proceeded gradually, delineation of the holding boundaries may have been a priority or even a requirement.

The outline of other similarly shaped holdings may well have survived to be recorded on early maps and, although an origin in parks and other enclosures needs to be eliminated and supporting evidence found in each case, this may represent one way of identifying early settlements in a particular area.

Ecclesiastical, administrative and tenurial history

The early ecclesiastical history of the Blackheath Hundred is relatively well understood and the outlines of its parochial structure are shown in figure 8.7.

Shalford, the mother church, is situated at the older-settled, northern end of the estate. Of the other two churches assessed with the Bramley estate in 1086, Wonersh retains signs that it once contained late 11th century fabric (Johnston 1911, 125b) and an extant print of the church at Hascombe which was demolished in about 1860 shows what appears to have been a pre-Conquest architectural style (Blair 1991, 116, fig 29a). The present Bramley church dates from the 12th century and originated as a chapelry of Shalford (as did Wonersh) and a set of depositions dating to the late 16th century record the resentment of the people of Bramley at having to pay burial rites to Shalford, despite Bramley being the larger settlement (SHC: LM454). Bramley did not become an independent parish until 1844 (Redstone 1911, 80a, 86b) although Wonersh had done so by 1291. Some link between Shalford and Dunsfold may be suggested by the gift of the advowsons of both churches by Edward I to the hospital of St Mary at Spital without Bishopgate in 1304 (Redstone 1911, 111b, 96b). The church assessed under Shalford *vill* in 1086 appears to have been that at its Wealden outlier, Alfold: when first mentioned in the 13th century it was appurtenant to [East] Shalford Manor (Blair 1991, 122). The antiquity of the hill top site of St Martha's Chapel is uncertain. No church is recorded under Chilworth in 1086 but lack of a mention in Domesday cannot be taken as definitive. The present church fabric is essentially 19th century, replacing an early 12th century structure, but the discovery of a 6th century urn close to the church (Anon 1916), the prominence of the hilltop site and its unusual dedication have led to the suggestion that the location may have been of significance during the early Saxon period (Morris 1959). Churches at Albury and Shere are recorded in 1086 and the former retains a late Saxon building.

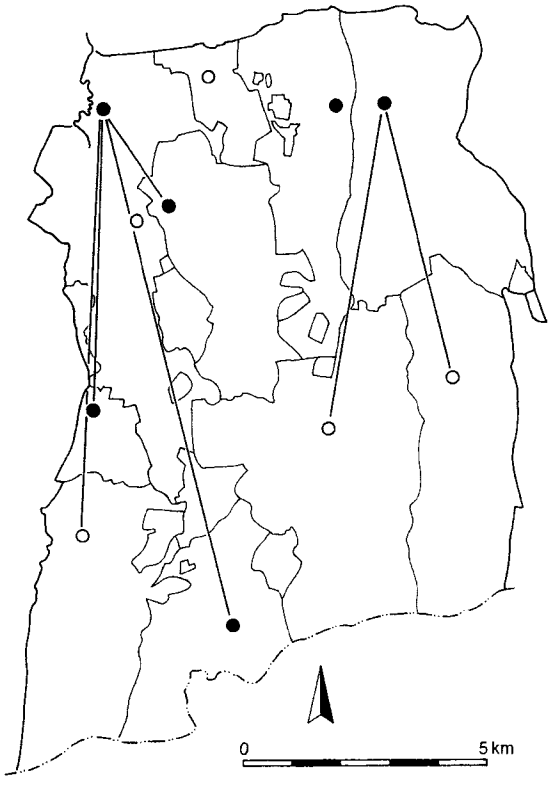

Fig 8.7 Ecclesiastical organization in the Blackheath Hundred.

Cranleigh church, not mentioned in 1086, originated as a daughter church of Shere (Redstone 1911, 91–2). Although the earliest structural evidence is thought to date to about 1170, excavations on the island of the moat that was later to enclose the Rectory produced pre-moat pottery of the early 11th century (English 2001). The capital messuage of Vachery, the southern portion of Shere manor, is a moated site some 2km south-east of Cranleigh. The present settlement of Cranleigh may have originated as two separate hamlets of farms placed around areas of common, one in each half of the Blackheath Hundred. Cranleigh Common would have been within the Bramley estate while the church, sited on the northern edge of an area of common later called Luck's Green, and within the southern portion of Shere manor, seems to have been placed to serve the populations of both hamlets, as was common practice in the Weald. Cranleigh glebe abutted upon the eastern boundary of the Bramley estate, which was probably represented by the later manorial and property boundary, the Spital Ditch (SHC: G46/6/15–18; G96/4/1). Ownership of both Shere and Gomshall by members of the royal family before the Conquest may suggest that the division between them had only recently taken place. Unusually, for a royal manor, Gomshall was not provided with a church and that of Ewhurst, its southern, Wealden, portion, was another daughter church to Shere, albeit a most impressive one. Despite having a smaller population and value in 1086, Shere, owned by Queen Edith before the Conquest, appears to have been the senior holding and its church, provided with a large glebe, would have served the entire estate prior to its division into Shere and Gomshall and both holdings after that event.

Of the eleven medieval churches in the Blackheath Hundred, seven are in the Bramley half of the hundred and only four in the Gomshall half; of those mentioned in 1086 the figures are four and two respectively. However, this continuing imbalance is not reflected in the population trends between the 1086 Domesday survey and the 1332 lay subsidy returns (SRS 1932, 22–31). Neither of these sources

can easily be used to give an absolute measure of the contemporary population or wealth, but comparative statistics between different areas can be gauged (Darby *et al* 1979; Williams 1982, *passim*). The figures resulting from such a comparison for the taxation areas of the Blackheath Hundred are shown in table 8.1.

The population figures in this table show a faster relative growth for the taxation areas of Albury, Shere and Gomshall, in the eastern portion of the Hundred, than for the western half. Although it is possible that the named settlements were expanding at different rates it is more likely that the portions of the Weald Clay which were to become the parishes of Cranleigh and Ewhurst were being extensively settled for the first time. The relative taxable value for Shere and Gomshall is only slightly higher than for the other *villata* despite the higher rate of population expansion, again emphasizing the low returns resulting from attempts to exploit the heavy clay. This suggestion of a number of poor farmers in the eastern half of the Hundred indicates a need to treat these figures with some circumspection. The 1332 population figures are counts of heads of household above a taxation threshold and a difference in the proportion between those above and below the threshold will thus distort the ratio. Tax avoidance also leads to unquantifiable errors.

By the 14th century, the present Wealden churches were all in existence and had been assessed individually in the taxation levied by Pope Nicholas in 1291, but the settlements to which they were attached to do not appear in the lay subsidy returns of 1332. Of those listed in the returns, about 25% have a given name attached by the preposition *de* or *atte* to their place of habitation. Where those place-names can be identified with modern names, the positions of the settlements have been mapped (fig 8.8). The relationship between the parent holdings and their Wealden subordinates in the eastern part of the Hundred is clear, as is the position of Cranleigh parish astride the boundary between the two halves. The inclusion within Bramley of holdings in Shalford, Wonersh, Dunsfold and Hascombe reflects the size of the Bramley estate. The Shalford holdings appear to have some similarity with the strip distribution that

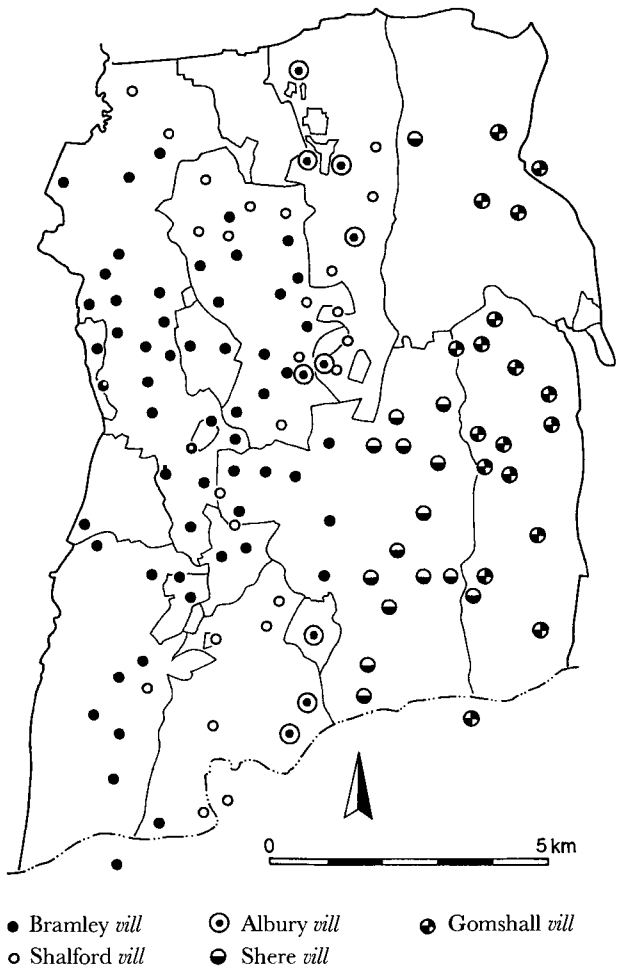

Fig 8.8 Relationship between place-names mentioned in the lay subsidy returns of 1332 and ecclesiastical parishes derived from relevant tithe maps.

was common further east and, since in 1086 and later Shalford was clearly part of the Bramley estate, it is possible that this distribution reflects an earlier arrangement that was overridden by an expansion of that estate. The number of holdings south of the southern boundary of the Hundred is an indication of the instability of the county boundary between Surrey and Sussex in this area.

Manors do not always respect hundredal boundaries. Most notable among these anomalies are those which affect the eastern boundary of the Hundred since this is postulated by Blair (1991, fig 4) as representing a primary boundary between the Godalming and Leatherhead territorial units. At least two tenurial links cross that boundary. First, the manor of

TABLE 8.1 Relative changes in population and value parameters for medieval taxation areas in the Blackheath Hundred.

	Population			Value		
Area	1086	1332	1332/1086	1086	1332	1332/1086
Bramley	155	282	1.82	£63.85	£18.83	0.29
Shalford	50	92	1.84	£20.00	£6.63	0.33
Albury	20	54	2.70	£9.00	£2.95	0.33
Shere	31	78	2.52	£15.00	£5.33	0.36
Gomshall	44	118	2.68	£20.00	£8.00	0.40

Sutton, now in Shere, was in Wotton Hundred in 1086 and was owned there by Bishop Odo of Bayeux, holder of the Bramley estate. During the medieval period, Sutton (in Shere and Abinger) was called Holdhurst at Downe and was associated with Holdhurst, a Wealden holding in the western portion of Cranleigh parish and an outlying portion of the manor of Shere (Redstone 1911, 116a). Secondly, post-medieval court rolls (in private ownership and now apparently lost) for the manor of Wildwood, sub-infeudated by Albury and forming a detached portion of that parish in the Weald between Alfold and Cranleigh parishes (fig 8.1), owed suit of court to the Sheriff's 'toon' at Wotton (WM Court Book). Other holdings which fail to respect the hundredal boundary involve the northern part, where the Clere portion of the divided Bramley estate included the tithing of West Clandon, north of the North Downs in Woking Hundred, and the western part, where the Fay portion included the tithings of Puttenham and Catteshall in Godalming Hundred. This division into Fay and Clere, which will be further discussed later in this paper, took place in 1241. The instability of the southern boundary has already been noted. It is not certain that any of these breaches in the integrity of the hundredal boundary date from a sufficiently early period to challenge the division of Surrey into primary regions based on the hundredal structure as suggested by Blair (1991, 12–24). However, as the link between Holdhurst at Downe in Wotton Hundred and Holdhurst in Cranleigh in Blackheath pre-dates the Domesday survey, an automatic acceptance of the details of his boundaries is premature.

There are considerable differences in manorial arrangements between the two halves of the Blackheath Hundred. In the eastern half, the older manors were located in the Tillingbourne valley. If, as seems likely, this half was once a single holding, the division between Shere and Gomshall would have occurred before 1086. Both these manors originally stretched south towards the Surrey/Sussex boundary and both were later sub-divided, Shere as a split inheritance into Shere Eboracum and Shere Vachery and Gomshall by grants of Henry I into moieties that eventually became known as Gomshall Netley and Gomshall Towerhill (Redstone 1911, 115). With the exception of Holdhurst, the southern, Wealden, members became detached, often as sub-infeudated manors at various times between the 12th and early 14th centuries; the information available from Manning & Bray (1804, 499, 501, 537; 1809, 71) is summarized in table 8.2 and figure 8.9. In the following two tables italic print indicates holdings situated primarily on Weald Clay.

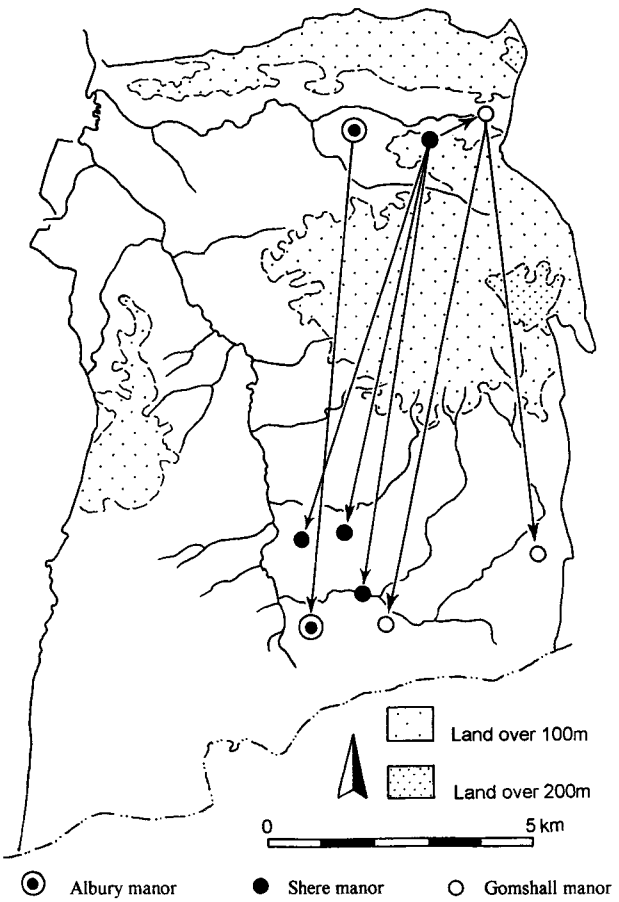

Fig 8.9 Manorial fragmentation in the eastern portion of Blackheath Hundred predating 1303. (© Crown Copyright NC/04/25242)

All these manors and sub-manors and their holdings formed compact areas of land and no attempt appears to have been made to ensure that each contained a range of soil types and hence a varied resource base. The Wealden manors had little but cold, heavy Weald Clay to farm while the manors of the Tillingbourne valley lost their Wealden products, a situation which led to the development of

TABLE 8.2 Manorial fragmentation in the eastern half of Blackheath Hundred pre-dating 1303. *Italic* indicates holdings situated primarily on Weald Clay.

Parent manor	Sub-division	Date
	Division into Shere & Gomshall	pre-1086
Shere	*Holdhurst* detached	pre-1086
Gomshall	Divided into Gomshall Netley, Gomshall Towerhill and *Somersbury*	*c* 1170
Gomshall	*Pollingfold* detached	*c* 1280
Albury	*Wildwood* detached (but see text)	1291
Shere	Divided into Shere Eboracum & Shere Vachery	1297
Shere	*Knowle/Knoll* detached	pre-1303

plantations on the North Downs in Albury by the late 15th century (SHC: 1322/1/2).

In contrast, the break-up of the western half of the Hundred resulted in such a complex jigsaw of intermixed manors that by the 17th century it had become impossible to decide to which of several manors many small areas of common land belonged (see for example SHC: G24/7/1). Such was the uncertainty that in 1847 the lords of the manors of East Bramley and Wintershall took the pragmatic decision to utilize the newly built turnpike road, which passed through a number of the disputed areas, as the boundary between their relative jurisdictions (SHC: 3243/12/13). The fragmentation of the manors of Shalford and Bramley is indicated in table 8.3 and figure 8.9.

Within Bramley manor further divisions into tithings are evidenced from the court records. The Fay portions comprised five tithings, of which one, Catteshall, lay to the west of the Wey (ie in Godalming Hundred). The Clere portion comprised nine tithings. In addition, Wintershall manor (alienated from Bramley by 1227) was itself divided into three tithings. The other manors detached before 1241 may also have comprised similar divisions (SHC: 892/5/2; SHC: 212/15/1; SHC: 892/5/1. However Blair (1991, 26, 184 n 92) counts only twelve tithings, ie those contained within the Fay and Clere portions.

The exact areas encompassed by these manors are difficult to define since the core Bramley manors were further divided in the post-medieval period and then recombined in 1809 and much of the medieval integrity (and supporting documentary evidence) has been lost. An attempt to reconstruct the medieval manors from the available court rolls and rentals is shown in figure 8.10. It is clear from this exercise that, unlike the eastern half of the Blackheath Hundred, the Bramley estate was not divided into compact manors but that each manor held land dispersed throughout the area. The most common manifestation of this is that all the manors held some land in the clay of the Weald, holdings which may have originated as grazing areas. However, several manors held detached areas in the Bramley Wey valley favourable for arable use and some also held detached areas of downland suitable for grazing sheep.

Only one document survives which gives complete details of the formation of a new manor through this fragmentation process and that is the grant dated to the early 13th century by which Brother Simon, prior of Bysshemead (possibly Bushmead, Bedfordshire) granted to William de Wintershall 29 men, their families and successors, and their lands and tenements, rights and services, to form the manor of Bramley Wintershall alias Selhurst (SHC: Zg36). The details of this land, mainly freehold and, as far as can be deduced, its location, are given in table 8.4 and figure 8.11. These identifications have been confirmed from later, more detailed, descriptions in the court rolls for Wintershall manor of 1319–95 (SHC: G47/1–6). These court rolls enable a further number of holdings of Wintershall to be identified which may have originated in sub-divisions of the original holdings. These are also shown in figure 8.11.

The capital messuage of Wintershall manor was set on a gentle south-east facing slope on the greensand above one of the small streams feeding into the Bramley Wey. The manor encompassed much of the ridge bounding the western side of the main valley. The soil is an acid sand that supports grass suitable for grazing sheep but, except in small areas in valleys, deteriorates rapidly if ploughed. A number of holdings – Slades, Thorncombe and Brookwell, for example – are situated in these valleys but others – viz Carringham, Cowgate and Jerseys – are on high

TABLE 8.3 Manorial fragmentation in the western half of Blackheath Hundred. *Italic* indicates holdings situated primarily on Weald Clay.

Parent manor	Subdivision	Date
Shalford [East]	*Markwick* detached	*c* 1200
Shalford [East]	*Monktonhook* detached	*c* 1200
Shalford [East]	Divided into Shalford Bradeston and Shalford Clifford	1297
Shalford Bradeston	*Rickhurst* detached	1413
Shalford Bradeston	Losterford detached	pre-1547
Bramley	Chilworth detached	pre-1086
Bramley	*Thorncombe* detached	pre-1205
Bramley	*Wintershall* detached	pre-1227
Bramley	*Burningfold* detached	pre-1233
Bramley	*Utworth* detached	pre-1234
Bramley	Unstead detached	pre-1256
Bramley	Haldish detached	pre-1304
Bramley	Divided into Clere and Fay moieties	1241
Fay moiety	Divided into Appesley and Pope moieties	1485
Clere moiety	Divided into East Bramley (Tangley), West Bramley and an un-named third estate	1656
Utworth	*Rydinghurst* detached	pre-1331

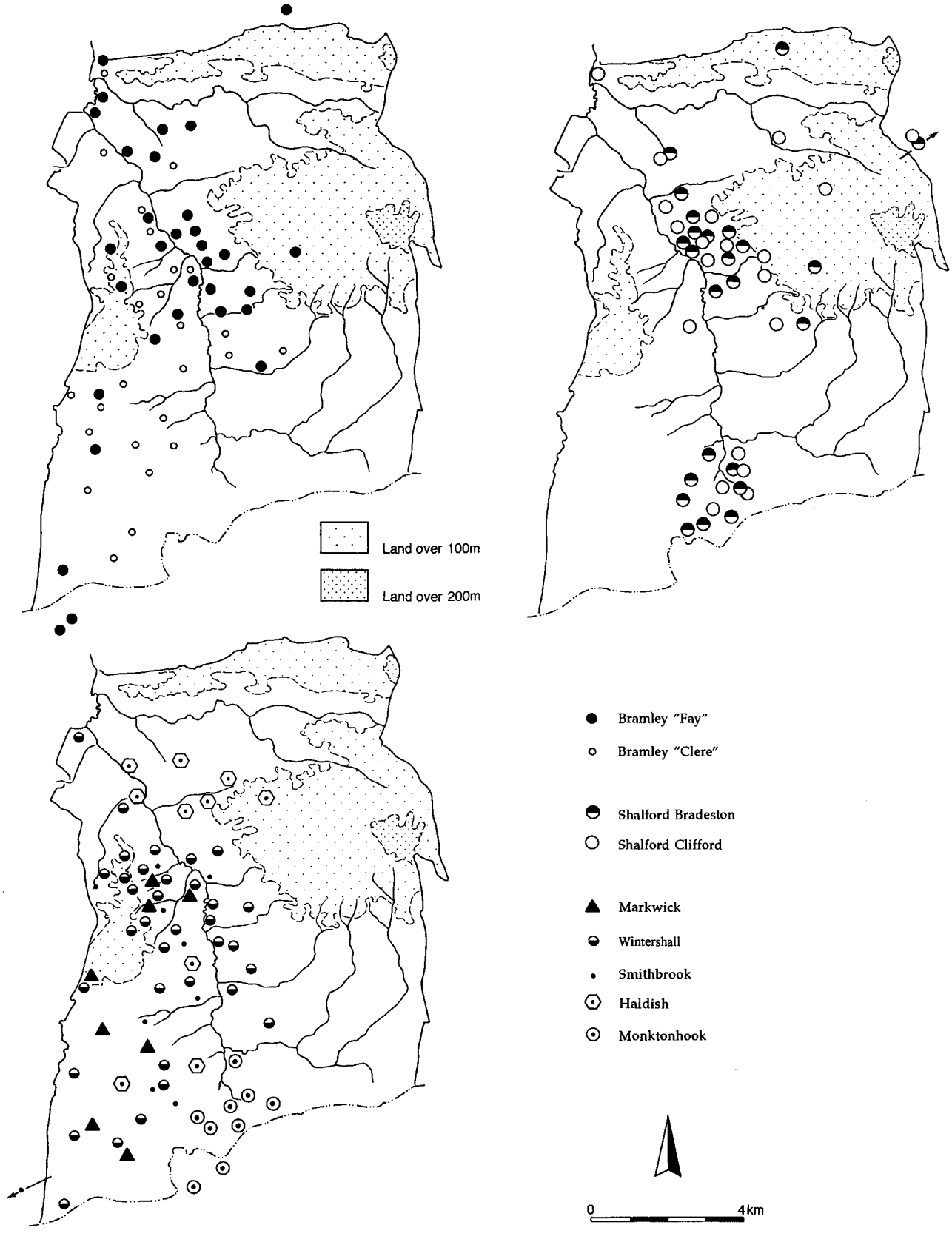

Fig 8.10 Manorial holdings in the western portion of the Blackheath Hundred based on evidence from court rolls and rentals. (© Crown Copyright NC/04/25242)

ground and were probably used for stock raising. The name Emply, also situated on the greensand ridge, suggests that some at least of this ground was still wooded. Areas of good arable land in the Bramley Wey valley were included in the holdings Wipley, Elmbridge, Birtley, Garston and Rydinghurst – the last mentioned containing the element *ersc*. Close to the river, water-meadows would be available at Risbridge, Run, Brigham and, in the Wey valley, at Unstead. Access to resources on Weald Clay were available at Howicks, Rams, Oakhurst, Burningfold and Hall Place. The holdings selected when this

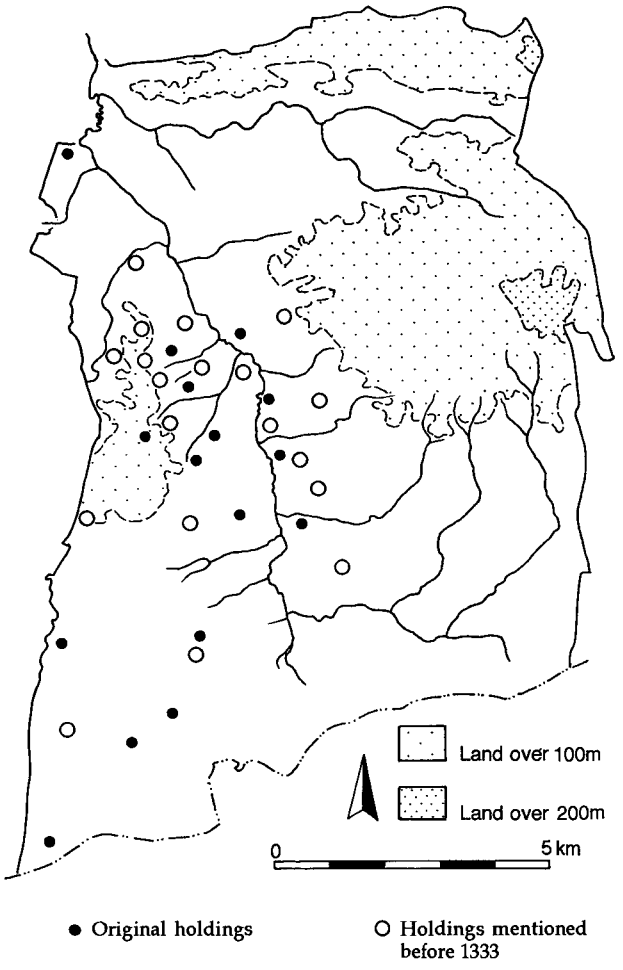

Fig 8.11 Holdings of Bramley Wintershall als Selhurst manor (based on SHC: Zg36). (© Crown Copyright NC/04/25242)

manor was created, with a core area around the capital messuage and a patchwork of detached farms with access to a range of resources, produced an economically viable entity and suggests a deliberate policy behind the break-up of the former multiple estate.

Discussion

The lack of either pre-Conquest documentary survival or any relevant archaeological data[2] renders impossible a consideration of the early administrative history of the Blackheath Hundred or even the location of any early settlement sites. While the hundredal system in evidence in the Domesday survey of 1086 can be used to reconstruct hypothetical earlier primary territories (Blair 1991, 12–24), there are suggestions that these hundreds replaced still earlier units. An argument based on the topography of the area south of the North Downs, and following the model proposed by Klingelhofer (1992) for Hampshire, might see the Godalming primary unit, after the excision of the Farnham estate, as two valley estates based on the Wey and the Bramley Wey, and a further similar unit to the east with an estate based on Dorking and the valley of the Mole.

The Hundred meeting place for the Blackheath Hundred is assumed to have been somewhere on the high, exposed sandy area of Blackheath. Rosemary Hill has been suggested as a location (Knox 1963) and, while the attempt to derive the name from the roast meat consumed at Hundred meetings seems fanciful, a small hill on high open land would conform with the type of site for open-air meetings elsewhere (Meaney 1997). The parishes of St Martha's, Shalford, Wonersh and Albury converge on Rosemary Hill, placing it on the boundary between the western and eastern halves of the Hundred and a number of tracks also meet there. In 1377, however, a meeting of the Blackheath Hundred took place at Perrybridge, a point on the extreme western boundary of the Hundred where the road from Shalford crosses the Wey. This has been dismissed as aberrant since the meeting discussed a specific dispute relating to a bridge over the Wey (Knox 1963) but the route links the major settlements of Godalming and Blackheath Hundreds and may preserve some memory of a period when the two were linked administratively – fords and bridges have been seen as primary locations for hundred meeting places (Meaney 1997).

TABLE 8.4 Men and land granted in the creation of Bramley Wintershall manor before 1227.

Name given	Present name	Name given	Present name
Andrew de Tunhamsted	Unstead	Robert Glede	Slade's Farm
Richard fabr'	Smithbrook	Robert de Ochurst	Ockhurst
William prepositum		William de la Brok	Brookwell
John de Howyk	Howicks	Richard de Fraxino	Elmbridge Farm
Ailwin of Bramley		Geoffrey de la Legh	Lea Farm
Henry de Howyk		Howicks	Henry de la Lythe
Henry de Boueton		Robert de Ram	Ramsnest
Gilbert Glede	Slade's Farm	William Russel	
William Luffe		John de la Fuchte	Furtherfits
Richard Coleman		William de Sudhescoumbe	
William le Hevenere		Norman de Keringheam	Carringham
John de Godebrug		Gilbert de Risbrugh	Risbridge Farm
Nicholas de Bernolegh		Richard de Keringheam	Carringham
William de Vippelee	Wipley	Richard Hupehill of Bramley	Hullbrook
John Franceys	Francis Ride		

Place-names give clear evidence of differential development within the Blackheath Hundred although the suggestion of early settlement in the western half when compared with the Weald in general rests with the highly speculative pagan place-name of Underslaw and the occurrence of a *-worth* name, Utworth, both close to the southern extreme of the Bramley Wey valley. Later however, there is clear evidence from place-names indicative of types of land use of the importance of the differences in geology and therefore soil type within the Hundred. An early emphasis on labour-intensive, arable farming with permanent settlements on suitable land in the Bramley Wey valley and stock raising, initially on a transhumance basis, in the remainder of the Hundred, was the probable genesis of the higher population in the western half of the Hundred noted in 1086.

Although some settlement almost certainly occurred earlier, possibly in the 9th or 10th century, the transfer of status from the defensive *burh* at Eashing to the commercial centre of Guildford (Hill 2000) provided impetus in the form of a population centre and market for the development of its hinterland, including the Bramley Wey valley. Linked to this is the holding by both Shalford and Bramley of properties in Guildford in 1086 (Darby & Campbell 1962, 398).

The ecclesiastical arrangements noted in the Domesday survey indicate the presence of a multiple estate but the specialization suggested by place-name evidence relates land use to soil type rather than to anything centrally imposed, although these two explanations are not mutually exclusive. The Bramley estate comprised at least seventeen tithings which may represent internal divisions pre-dating the formation of the estate and a similar situation in the Mole valley south of Dorking in Surrey has been claimed (Blair 1991, 26). The archiepiscopal estate of South Malling in Sussex provides a possible parallel (Jones 1976). There the estate stretched from Lewes on the coast north through the Weald towards the Sussex/Surrey boundary. It contained two groups, each of six *borghs*, one group within and one without the wood. Within each *borgh* were a number of hamlets and isolated holdings, all of which owed complex and well-defined services to the archbishop's court at South Malling.

The question arises as to why Bramley, not a parish until 1844, was named as the estate *caput* in the Domesday survey and as a parent manor thereafter. The mother church was almost certainly on the site of the present Shalford church, at the northern extremity of the estate, the closest point to the mercantile centre of Guildford and close to an important fording point over the Tillingbourne: this latter point is of particular relevance since the place-name Shalford contains the potentially early topographical element *ford*. However, the later manorial *caput* of Shalford manor was probably the moated site at East Shalford (TQ 0145 4740) and it is this area, bordering on the north side of Shalford Common and close to another fording point on the Tillingbourne which may represent the centre of the Domesday estate. The fair and market granted by John to the rector of Shalford took place within the church and churchyard of the present village but, immediately it grew too large for that location and spread beyond the churchyard wall, it came into the fee of Bramley (Redstone 1911, 110). South of the present churchyard is an open triangular area which seems to have been the site of the market from which coloured Wealden glass was bought for the windows of Farnham Castle in 1224 (Brooks 1985, 7). This area now forms the historic core of Shalford village and the long street of Bramley with its 12th century chapel lies some 3km to the south. This may represent a deliberate spatial separation between the ecclesiastical power of an important mother church and the secular centre owned before the Conquest by Alnoth *cild* (Aethelnoth of Canterbury, a major Kentish *thegn* and among William's leading hostages in 1067) and later by Odo of Bayeux.

While the *falods* of the Blackheath Hundred were used for grazing, this does not seem to have involved the long distance transhumance associated with the Weald of Kent and East Surrey (cf Turner in prep). Although, long after Domesday, the villages of the Tillingbourne valley and the Bramley estate held land as far south as the Surrey/Sussex boundary – land for the Wealden triad of uses: grazing, timber and iron – the distances involved were relatively short and the grazing areas probably never far removed from the dispersed farmsteads. That some of this area was still being used for stock raising after the Conquest is indicated by the occasional occurrence of relevant place-names in Norman-French.

The word 'land' now has a very general meaning but during the medieval period and later, in the Latin form *terra* it usually referred to arable land. Gelling has suggested that the meaning could be further narrowed to 'ground newly broken-in for arable farming' and, more recently, to 'one of the terms employed to denote new settlements of the 7th to 12th centuries, established is areas colonised or reclaimed in response to an increasing need for arable' (Gelling & Cole 2000, 279). *Breche*, derived from ME rather than OE, is also associated with new arable land and both elements occur in the eastern half of the Blackheath Hundred emphasizing again the later development of that portion (neither element appears in the western half).

Fragmentation of the larger estates had started before 1086 and continued through the medieval

period and later. Most of the divisions that are documented occurred when manors were split between heirs but the creation of Bramley Wintershall can be seen as a grant of men, their families and their freehold land to a local landowner. In the eastern half of the Hundred the divisions resulted in compact manors but in the western half a different pattern emerged. A clear factor in this latter area was the continuing concern to ensure that all manors had a wide range of types of land. This resulted in a patchwork of holdings within the Bramley Wey valley and the area of the Weald to the south. The reason for this contrast between the two halves of the Hundred is uncertain but the division of the Bramley estate appears to have been a more controlled exercise over several centuries. Ownership by the de Fay family from 1156 until after 1241, and the division of the estate at that date between two de Fay sisters, may provide some context.

In summary, the underlying geology played a fundamental role in the division of the Blackheath Hundred into four areas settled at successive periods and, initially at least, with different types of land utilization. The first of these is the Upper Greensand, Gault Clay and Lower Greensand of the Tillingbourne valley, an area of eventually nucleated settlements and open field systems with land stretching from the top of the North Downs, across the valley and into the Weald; the second is the geologically intermixed valley of the Bramley Wey, location of the late Saxon multiple estate and confused manorial geography; the third the Weald Clay in the southern portion of the Hundred, where the present dispersed settlement pattern developed from a stock-based, transhumance economy; and, last, the high escarpment of the Lower Greensand (which reaches 294m at Leith Hill outside the Blackheath Hundred). These hills are capped by beds of rock resistant to erosion: chert bands protect the Hythe Beds at Leith, Coneyhurst and Hascombe Hills, while ironstone (carstone) masses cap the Folkestone Beds on Albury, Farley and Black-heaths. These areas of rapidly draining, acid, sandy podzols – the 'rascally heaths' of Cobbett – remain only sparsely populated.

These differences indicate the risks inherent in regional or supra-regional studies in terms of rendering particular geological areas as homogeneous entities. The area provides one example of the skill with which late Saxon and early medieval people identified, selected and utilized resources on a very local basis with concomitant differences in both the chronology and economic basis of development.

Towards a research agenda

We return to the quotation with which we headed this paper. The thesis advanced can only be tested by continuing study within the Blackheath Hundred and by similar exercises in other hundreds to provide comparisons. As with other work proposed by Turner in this volume, such projects would benefit from a careful reappraisal of the Surrey Domesday entries on the lines of that undertaken for Wiltshire and Essex by McDonald & Snooks (1986). On the topographical front, one or two topic-based enquires demand attention. For example, the superficial variations across the county in field systems thrown up by recent work by Nicola Bannister (Bannister & Wills 2001; Bannister in this volume) need to be explored to illuminate their historical basis. Many aspects of this, such as holdings of the Rumbeams type described in the foregoing and the 'ladder' fields recognized in the Nutfield– Tandridge area, should be susceptible to archaeological as well as documentary and topographical investigation.

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NOTES

1 A decade or so ago occasional citations of 'Turner & Blair, forthcoming' appeared, mostly made by the two authors but also by colleagues who had seen one or other of various drafts that were prepared. The paper (working title 'Churches and manors in the Blackheath Hundred') was never brought to fruition as both authors became absorbed by different problems. Some of the content appeared in John Blair's *Early Medieval Surrey* (1991); much of the remainder is treated in the current paper. All citations of 'Turner & Blair forthcoming' should be treated with caution.

2 The Surrey Sites and Monuments Record surprisingly contains no entries for the Blackheath Hundred dated between the 4th and 13th centuries, other than churches.

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